

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus and method for switching VOIP packets in a data network, wherein the method includes the steps of receiving a first packet in a network switch and determining if the first packet is a VOIP packet. Further, method includes determining a dynamically negotiated VOIP port for a VOIP session from at least one of the first packet and a second packet received in the network switch, if the first packet is determined to be the VOIP packet. Finally, the method includes the steps of classifying all subsequent VOIP packets corresponding to the dynamically negotiated VOIP port in accordance with predetermined parameters. The apparatus includes a network switch having at least one data port interface controller supporting a plurality of data ports for transmitting and receiving data, and a fast filtering processor in communication with the at least one data port interface. At least one filtering table in communication with the fast filtering processor is provided, wherein the fast filtering processor is configured to snoop packets being transmitted through the network switch to trap a VOIP call setup message, and thereafter, determine a dynamically negotiated VOIP port so that all subsequent VOIP packets can be filtered and assigned an appropriate priority.

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